



MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents

FROM: Wes Bruce

DATE: September 24, 2009

SUBJECT: Identifying Students Potentially At-Risk of Not Completing High School in Four Years

The “At-Risk” index for the class of 2013 is now available on the STN Application Center. The pilot tool uses STN data, together with research findings about dropouts and school completion, to determine if a student is potentially at-risk of not completing high school in four years.

Please note that this is still a pilot. We will continue to refine the calculations and indicators based on feedback from you. The high school tool looks at incoming Grade 9 students (Grade 8 students in 2008-09) and uses retention, attendance, mobility and achievement to assign high, medium, or low risk of not finishing high school “on time.” As our data collection becomes more comprehensive in future years, for example when we begin collecting student level course completion information, the tools will become more sophisticated.

High School At-Risk Index:

Age and Retention

Student was not retained and will be 18 on June 30, 2013 (“Expected Graduation”)	0 points
Student was not retained but will be 19 on June 30, 2013	1 point
Student was retained or will be 20 on June 30, 2013	2 points

ISTEP

Student passed both subjects at Grade 7 and Grade 8	0 points
Student did not pass English at Grade 7	1 point
Student did not pass math at Grade 7	1 point
Student did not pass English at Grade 8	2 points
Student did not pass math at Grade 8	2 points

Mobility

Student had no reported mobility	0 points
Student had one reported incident of mobility	1 point
Student and two or more reported incidents of mobility	2 points

Attendance

Greater than 95%	0 points
90% to 95%	1 point
Less than 90% or more than 15 days unexcused absences	2 points

Based on total points, the potential risk levels for entering grade 9 students are:

Low Risk (No Highlighting)	0-3 points
Medium Risk (Yellow Highlighting)	4-8 points
High Risk (Red Highlighting)	9-12 points

Access to the At-Risk Index:

Once logged-in to the STN Application Center, elect “At-Risk” from the “Lookup” menu, then use the drop down menu to select the school. You can “drill” down to get additional information about individual students. In school corporations with more than one high school, the data is presented at the middle school level.

Please make sure that the appropriate individuals are given access to this “Lookup” function ([View Students At Risk](#)) via the STN Application Center. Remember that data are taken from STN. A school may have identified a student as having a certain characteristic, limited English proficiency, for example, earlier in the student’s career than that characteristic first appears in the drill down. That simply means that the data were not collected or reported through STN until that year. Please also remember that both **the list of “at-risk” students and any student level data are protected by state and federal laws.** Please remind everyone granted access to this information that student’s privacy rights must be protected.

As a first step, we suggest you review the data provided and see if you have other information that may help refine the level of risk of these students. Second, and most important, determine what interventions might be appropriate. Examine the programs you already have in place to see if they will meet the identified needs of “at-risk” students. Below are several sources of information and research relevant to this issue. You will need to find the solution that will work best for your school and students.

<http://achieve.org/dropouts> – Achieve’s resources for dropout prevention

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/topic.aspx?tid=06> – US Dept of Ed “What Works Clearinghouse”

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf – IES Guide to Dropout Prevention

http://www.ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V6N7_Summer_2008_EPB.pdf – CEEP Policy Brief

<http://www.betterhighschools.org/topics/DropoutPrevention.asp> – National High School Center’s dropout prevention resources

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/default.htm> – National Dropout Prevention Center

If you have questions about the at-risk index, please contact Wes Bruce at wbruce@doe.in.gov.